

## Message Text

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44

ACTION SS-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 4327

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR AO US BE

SUBJECT: DISCUSSIONS ON ANGOLA

REF: STATE 97817

WE DISCUSSED ANGOLA SITUATION WITH FOREIGN MIINSTRY OFFICIAL  
WILLEM VERKAMMEN, APRIL 30. HE WAS IN BASIC AGREEMENT WITH U.S.  
ANALYSIS OF TRENDS THERE AS PRESENTED IN REFTEL. VERKAMMEN  
MADE FOLLOWING SUPPLEMENTARY POINTS:

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(A) INITIAL BELGIAN ANALYSIS OF ALVES WAS THAT HE WAS FURTHER TO THE LEFT THAN SOVIET COMMUNISTS, THAT HE WAS PRIMARILY A DEMAGOGUE AND THAT HE WAS TRYING TO EXPLOIT POPULAR FEELINGS AMONG BLACK ANGOLANS AGAINST MORE ORTHODOX, SOVIET-ORIENTED MPLA MULATTOES. BELGIANS NOW BELIEVE THAT SINCE ALVES' RETURN FROM MOSCOW HE IS CLOSELY FOLLOWING SOVIET LINE, BUT THAT HE HAS NOT MODERATED HIS RACIST, ANTI-MULATTO, LINE.

(B) BELGIANS SPECULATE, BASED ON LENGTHY AFRICAN EXPERIENCE, THAT ALVES MAY YET PROVE TO BE MORE AFRICAN THAN COMMUNIST IN HIS OUTLOOK. THEY SEE SOME DILEMMA FOR THE SOVIETS IN BACKING ALVES AGAINST THE MULATTO GROUP OF MPLA LEADERS, WHOM THE BELGIANS CONSIDER AS THE ONLY REALLY DOCTRINAIRE TRAINED MARXISTS IN AFRICA.

(C) BELGIAN REPORTS INDICATE THAT AUGUSTINHO NETO WAS MENACED FROM BOTH HIS LEFT (ALVES) AND RIGHT (LARGELY MULATTO) FLANKS. THEY BELIEVE THAT NETO HAS CONTROLLED THE RIGHTIST MENACE TO HIS POSITION BY A WAVE OF ARRESTS WHICH HAS EFFECTIVELY LIQUIDATED OR RENDERED IT IMPOTENT. NETO DOES NOT WANT TO ELIMINATE THE MULATTOES COMPLETELY AS THEY REPRESENT SOME OF THE ONLY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL HE HAS.

(D) BELGIANS BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT THE PRESENT ANGOLAN REGIME CANNOT DO WITHOUT CONTINUED CUBAN SUPPORT IN ALL SECTORS. THEY BELIEVE THAT IF CUBANS DEPARTED NOW THAT THE MPLA MIGHT FLOUNDER ON ACCOUNT OF ITS LACK OF EXPERIENCED PERSONNEL AND ITS BARELY SUBMERGED INTERNAL DIVISIONS. THEY HAVE NO INFORMATION ON CURRENT UNITA ACTIVITIES BUT HAVE HEARD OF SOME GUERRILLA ACTIVITY.

(E) BELGIANS HAVE RECEIVED NO INDICATION THAT CUBANS ARE LEAVING. THEY HAVE REPORTS THAT THERE IS A CONTINUED COMING AND GOING OF CUBANS, PRESUMABLY TO ROTATE THEIR FORCES IN ANGOLA. BELGIANS CONSIDER CUBANS ONLY ORGANIZED FORCE IN ANGOLA AND DO NOT EXPECT THEM TO LEAVE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

(F) BELGIANS HAD EXPECTED CONSIDERABLE AFRICAN PRESSURE  
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AND PUBLIC COMMENTARY THAT ONCE THE SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES LEFT ANGOLA, THE CUBANS SHOULD ALSO LEAVE. AS THAT HAS NOT MATERIALIZED, BELGIANS HAVE RECONSIDERED SITUATION. THEY NOW CONCLUDE THAT AFRICANS RECOGNIZE THAT THE MPLA NEEDS EXTERNAL SUPPORT TO SURVIVE AND THAT AFRICANS NOW CONSIDER THE CUBANS IN ANGOLA AN INTERNAL ANGOLAN MATTER.

(G) BASED UPON THEIR ANALYSIS PRESENTED IN F ABOVE,

BELGIANS DO NOT BELIEVE IT WISE FOR THE WEST TO STRESS HEAVILY THE CONTINUED CUBAN PRESENCE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH AFRICAN STATES. THEY BELIEVE THAT, IF THE AFRICANS DO INDEED CONSIDER THE CUBANS AN INTERNAL ANGOLAN MATTER, WESTERN EMPHASIS ON THEM WILL BE TAKEN AS MEDDLING IN AFRICAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

(H) BELGIANS DO NOT SEE HOW ANGOLA CAN SURVIVE ECONOMICALLY IN THE LONG RUN WITHOUT REESTABLISHING COMMERCIAL CONTACTS WITH THE WEST. BELGIANS ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING ANGOLAN PERMISSION TO RE-ESTABLISH SABENA FLIGHTS, SO FAR WITHOUT SUCCESS.

(I) BELGIANS ARE STILL SEEKING ANGOLAN AGREEMENT FOR THEIR AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO ANGOLA. THE ANGOLAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAS CABLED THE BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER IN A FRIENDLY, BUT NON-SUBSTANTIVE MESSAGE THAT THE MATTER OF ANGOLAN-BELGIAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WOULD BE EXAMINED. SO FAR THE BELGIANS HAVE NOT CONCLUDED THAT THE DELAY IN GRANTING AGREEMENT IS DUE TO A CONSCIOUS DECISION. BASED ON THEIR EXPERIENCE IN MOZAMBIQUE, THEY CONSIDER IT EQUALLY POSSIBLE THAT THE DELAY IS DUE TO AN ADMINISTRATIVE BREAKDOWN. THEY HAVE ONE REPORT THAT THE DANISH AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE IS ON THE POINT OF RECEIVING HIS AGREEMENT. IF THIS COMES ABOUT, IT WILL PROVE TO THEM THAT THE DELAY IN THEIR OWN CASE IS ADMINISTRATIVE RATHER THAN POLITICAL. (THE BELGIANS NOTE THAT THE SWEDES ARE ALSO STILL WAITING FOR THE AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE, WHICH HAS IRRITATED AND DISILLUSIONED THEM.) THE BELGIANS CONSIDER THE GRANTING OF AGREEMENT TO A WESTERN DIPLOMAT A KEY ELEMENT IN DETERMINING FUTURE TRENDS IN ANGOLA. THEY HAVE QUERIED THE DANISH GOVERNMENT ON THE STATUS OF THEIR AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE'S AGREEMENT.

(J) THE BELGIAN VICE CONSUL IN LUANDA HAS BEEN ABLE TO  
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ESTABLISH GOOD RELATIONS WITH A WIDE RANGE OF ANGOLAN OFFICIALS. HE HAS EXPERIENCED NO PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES RECENTLY. HE HAS REPORTED THAT HIS FRENCH COLLEAGUE HAS ALSO BEEN ACTIVE AND HAS EVEN VISITED THE INTERIOR. ON THE OTHER HAND, HIS PORTUGUESE COLLEAGUE HAS REMAINED ALMOST HIDDEN AND RECENT EVENTS IN LISBON MAKE HIS FUTURE PROBLEMATIC.

(K) BELGIAN AND EC-9 POLICY PLANNING FOR ANGOLA IS

NOT ADVANCED. IF THEY ARE TO DO SOMETHING IT WILL PROBABLY BE AIMED AT VORSTER AND SMITH, AND ESPECIALLY ON VORSTER OVER NAMIBIA, IN ORDER TO TRY TO REMOVE ANY PRETEXT FOR CONTINUED SOVIET/CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA. FIRESTONE

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